



Class Descriptions and Instructor Biographies Fall 2023

The Westport Center for Senior Activities (WCSA) is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for adults aged 60 years or older by offering the opportunity to continue to learn and develop, maintain optimum physical, mental, and social well-being, and to enjoy recreation and companionship in a pleasant and safe environment. The WCSA offers programs in fitness, the arts, culinary, French language study, wellness, current events, and support groups. Below is a list of class descriptions, and on page 13, you will find the instructor's biographies in alphabetical order.

Art and Music Classes

**Please see the art supply list on the [WCSA website](#).*

3-D Origami

Nor Smitobol will be teaching a class in 3-D origami sculpture. Learn to make the basic fold and then create 3-dimensional sculptures.

Instructor: Nor Smitobol. Class limit: 10.

Abstract Art

Abstract art uses the visual language of shape, form, color, and line to create a composition that may exist with a degree of independence from visual references in the world. In this class, you will incorporate nature into your design. This is a perfect class to discover your creative self. You do not need to know how to draw. Participants supply their own materials. See art supply list for supplies.

Instructor: Althea Ericsson. Class limit: 12.

Creating Your Own Artistic Vision

Artist Chris Goldbach will teach a new class on Thursday afternoons on Zoom. This class encourages beginners and more advanced artists to pursue their style in their favorite medium. This critique class will help students develop and grow while working on their favorite subjects: any medium, style, or subject. Participants supply their own materials. See art supply list for supplies.

Instructor: Chris Goldbach. Class limit: 20.

Drawing From Nature

This course focuses on a different subject each week (flowers, leaves, fruit, etc.) looking closely at the parts and discovering what characteristics make them different. We draw in pencil with an emphasis on accuracy and form. Participants supply their own materials. See art supply list for supplies.

Instructor: Dick Rauh. Class limit: 18.

Art and Music Classes

Drawing, Mixed Levels

This class is for someone with some drawing skills, those looking to sharpen existing skills, or an utter beginner ready to delve more profoundly in drawing than just doodling. Basic media and techniques will be explored with a variety of subjects. Participants supply their own materials. See art supply list for supplies.

Instructor: Chris Goldbach. Class limit: 20.

Working with Oil Pastels

Oil pastels are a unique and versatile medium that fall halfway between being a tool for drawing and painting. Although you draw with oil pastels, the end result is like a painting without the mess of oil painting! We'll be working with water soluble oil pastels. Each class will begin with a brief tutorial where instructor Penny Pearlman will demonstrate techniques for creating different painterly effects with oil pastels that will keep your creativity flowing! See art supply list for supplies.

Instructor: Penny Pearlman. Class limit: 12.

Farm to Table Art

We will create fun images in graphite, pastels and watercolors of roosters, chickens, goats, pumpkins, corn etc. No experience necessary. Participants supply their own materials. See art supply list for supplies.

Instructor: Maj Kalfus. Class limit: 12.

Generative Writing

Each week we will discuss writing skills, do writing exercises, and then participants will write in response to one or several prompts. Skills, exercises, and prompts will vary each week. We will share our writing with each other each session for feedback. Please bring writing paper and a pen or pencil.

Instructor: Diane Lowman. Class limit: 10.

How to Write Your Memoir

Join Author Jill Amadio for a course on how to write a memoir. Topics include where to begin, how to trigger memories, the use of descriptive language, editing, polishing and finally, how to publish.

Instructor: Jill Amadio. Class limit: 12.

Intermediate & Advanced Watercolor

Bring an idea, a picture to paint from, or work on a project already in progress! Designer and painter Kathleen Burke will help you build on the skills you already have. This class is not for beginners. Artists are required to supply their own paper and art supplies. See art supply list for supplies.

Instructor: Kathleen Burke. Class limit: 10.

Art and Music Classes

Mastering the Medium of Your Choice

Instructor Linda McKie-McClellan will guide you in mastering the medium of your current or planned project in pencils, ink, pastels, watercolor, acrylic, and water-based oils. Linda will give demonstrations of beginner and advanced techniques. This class is open to all levels. Please bring your own supplies. See art supply list for supplies.

Instructor: Linda McKie-McClellan. Class limit: 12.

Open Art

The WCSA's art rooms will be available for artists to work on their projects and collaborate with others. With social distancing requirements still in effect, there will be limited space. No drop-ins are allowed.

No instructor. Class limit: 10.

Painting Realism

Each session will begin with a short demo as Cindy shows the progress of a painting from start to finish. This course will begin with instruction in design and lighting for a successful painting. It will continue with the draw-in phase to start the painting. Students will then learn to apply paints in layers to build the painting to a finish with each additional layer of paint. Students will learn to see and interpret value and color relationships, how to interpret reference material, methods to mix the correct color and value of paint, brush stroke and various ways to apply paint. All levels of painting skills are welcome. Students may work from a photograph of a landscape, portrait or still life or students may set up their own still life and work from life. Oil paint or acrylic paint may be used. Please see supply list for the medium of your choice (acrylic paints or oil paints).

Instructor: Cindy Wagner. Class limit: 12.

Sing-Along with Holly

Join Holly Betts for a sing-along or just come and listen to popular songs and tunes from The Great American Songbook.

Instructor: Holly Betts. Class limit: 14.

Stained Glass Instruction

This class will start by making a small, basic hanging ornament. You will learn how to cut glass, coming and soldering. Nor will provide all the tools and materials you need for the hanging ornament. *If you wish to progress to a more advanced project, you will need to provide your own materials and tools.*

Instructor: Nor Smitobol. Class limit: 10.

Traditional Origami

Nor Smitobol will be teaching a class in traditional origami. He will start with the basic folding and sculpting techniques. Once you master the basic folds, he will assist you on more advanced projects.

Instructor: Nor Smitobol. Class limit: 10.

Art and Music Classes

Ukulele, Intermediate Level

This class is for those who already know how to play the ukulele and wish to continue to build their skills. Come play, sing along, and have fun!

Instructor: Uncle Zac. Class limit: 10.

Understanding Perspective

Do you want to create more depth and structure in your drawings or paintings? Have you tried drawing in perspective before, but “don’t get it”? Understanding perspective is a critical skill in creating landscapes, still lifes and interiors that feel “right”. In this four-session course, your instructor, Penny Pearlman, will show you how to apply one- and two-point perspective in your artwork through a series of tutorials, observation and drawing exercises. See art supply list for supplies.

Instructor: Penny Pearlman. Class limit: 12.

Discussion Groups

Current Events

Facilitators Jon Fox and Marcia Goldstein lead a dynamic, interactive discussion on issues internationally and domestically. Bring your interest and knowledge of present-day world news and events.

Facilitators: Jon Fox and Marcia Goldstein. Class limit: 25.

Hard Times: Leadership in the US

This course will explore the complexities and confusions of leadership and followership in 21st century America. It will be about general and political leadership in business, education and religion, in the media and the military. To understand how we got to where we are, our group will consider, among other topics, American history, ideology, and technology. All registrants should be reasonably well-informed about domestic political events. The class is suitable to any interested lay person.

Facilitator: Barbara Kellerman. Class limit: 24.

Shakespeare Discussion Group

William Shakespeare is arguably the most famous crafter of words in the English language. Join us as we engage in a lively discussion of *Timon of Athens*, *The Sonnets* and *Taming of the Shrew*. Shakespeare Scholar Diane Lowman will lead everyone in a spirited group exploration. Participants are asked to bring their own copy of each play to the class. *Please note: This is not a lecture series; participants should have at least some familiarity with each play.*

Instructor: Diane Lowman. Class limit: 12.

Exercise Classes

Boxing

This class focuses on balance, mobility, and movement. Large bag work will be included. Boxing gloves are provided. Participants may be required to bring a spotter with them. Students must purchase their own hand wraps. *Exercise level: moderate.*

Instructor: Dan Lewis. Class limit: 10.

Boxing for Parkinson's Disease

This exercise class is designed for people who have been diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. Intense and high-energy workouts appear to dramatically improve physical health, daily functioning, and quality of life. You'll work with medicine balls, battle ropes and agility ladders and learn boxing punches. The friendship in this class also results in social and emotional benefits. Participants may be required to bring a spotter with them. Students must purchase their own hand wraps. *Exercise level: moderate.*

Instructor: Dan Lewis. Class limit: 10.

Cardio Drumming

Cardio drumming is a 45-minute exercise class that utilizes drumming movements. It can be practiced by nearly all individuals and does not require drumming experience. The exercise involves using drumsticks to hit an exercise ball placed on a bucket, while listening to upbeat music. *Exercise level: moderate.*

Instructor: Jill Franke. Class limit: 16.

Cardio Strength

Get ready to sweat and have fun in this high-energy class that gets your heart pumping and your muscles moving. No mats needed as you're on your feet for 1 full hour. This class is hybrid. *Exercise level: vigorous.*

Instructor: Shelley Moll. Class limit: 30 in-house.

Chair Aerobics

A chair-based class that includes 30-minutes of nonstop cardio and 15-minutes working with light weights. Expect to see improvement in your flexibility, balance and range of motion. This class is beneficial to all with or without previous exercise experience. *Exercise level: gentle/moderate.*

Instructor: Shelley Moll. Class limit: 35.

Dance & Stretch

This class is a dance-inspired cardio fitness program that is great for men and women. Learn the basic steps of Merengue, Mambo, Cha-Cha, Foxtrot, Waltz, and Tango. No partners are required. *Exercise level: vigorous.*

Instructor: Kristine Bingham. Class limit: 14.

Exercise Classes

Enhancing Your Balance

Explore strategies to incorporate a balance practice in your daily activities. Walking, using stairs, lifting and sitting can all be opportunities to practice balance and increase strength!

Exercise level: gentle.

Instructor: Paula Pastorelli-Schooler. Class limit: 18.

Essentrics, Gentle Stretch

Essentrics is a no-impact fitness program that combines stretching and strengthening with gentle, flowing exercises. This unique workout may help relieve chronic conditions such as back and neck pain, arthritis, bursitis, plantar fasciitis, and sciatica. It also increases your range of motion, improves balance, and keeps joints healthy. This class is done standing and using a chair. It's perfect for those who want to relieve pain and stiffness to be more mobile and energized. Appropriate for all fitness levels. This class is hybrid. *Exercise level: gentle.*

Instructor: Dyan DeCastro. Class limit: 14 in-house.

Exercise for Body Awareness

Tune into how your body feels as you move and enjoy the mind-body connection experience. Movement therapist Ruth Winnick will help you understand how to stretch and relax your muscles. Exercises will start in a chair and advance from there. *Exercise level: gentle.*

Instructor: Ruth Winnick. Class limit: 12.

Fit and Fun

Join Patty Kondub for 45-minutes of fun fitness exercises. Who says you can't have it all? Join Fit and Fun to raise your heart rate, challenge your hand-eye coordination and reaction time, and strengthen your legs, arms, and core with sitting and standing drills...while having fun! Each class includes 15-minutes of cardio drumming to music. *Exercise level: moderate.*

Instructor: Patty Kondub. Class limit: 14.

Fit Mix-Up

Mix it up with this energetic, total body workout. A variety of equipment will be used for different workouts each week. The class will focus on strength, cardio, core and balance. A mat is required for floor work. *Exercise level: vigorous.*

Instructor: Shelley Moll. Class limit: 12.

Functional Fitness

This class is held in our gym and includes using cardio equipment, fitness machines and free weights. Our certified trainers will demonstrate a variety of exercises to help you improve your strength, flexibility and mobility. *Exercise level: moderate.*

Instructors: Judy Samuels, Shelley Moll, Karen Liss. Class limit: 10.

Exercise Classes

Mind & Muscle (SWCAA)

The WCSA will offer a program to exercise the brain and body. Mind & Muscle Hour is the creation of fitness instructor, Patty Kondub. Eight years ago, Patty designed this social-based brain and exercise training program to help improve the speed of thinking, improve short and long-term memory, and improve the senior's physical condition. Balance and posture exercises that can be performed standing or sitting make up the "muscle" part of the hour and provide the senior with a practice activity for home. Participants enjoy physical and mental exercise while having fun, sharing laughs, and making new friends and connections. This program is funded through a grant from the Southwestern Connecticut Agency on Aging (SWCAA). All older persons (60 or over) are eligible for services under the approved program. Donations are accepted. *Exercise level: gentle.*

Instructor: Patty Kondub. Class limit: 24.

Muscle & Tone

Muscle & Tone is a fun and challenging class that combines cardiovascular exercise and strength using handheld weights and bands. We also work on balance and mobility. This is a total body workout with a focus on building leg strength and endurance. Chairs are used as a prop as well as mat work on the floor. Set to music, the class helps people of all levels get stronger and move better throughout the day. Please bring your mat for floorwork. *Exercise level: moderate.*

Instructors: Karen Liss, Judy Samuels. Class limit: 12.

Open Gym

Open gym is for those who would like to use the exercise equipment in our fitness room outside of class time. The gym will be available Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 8:45 to 10:00 AM. You must be knowledgeable about the equipment as this is purely a supervised open gym with no instruction.

Facilitators: Staff, Dan Lewis. Class limit: 24.

Parkinson's Fitness

This class will meet every Wednesday from 10:15 to 11:00 AM, except for the 4th Wednesday of the month when the Parkinson's Support Group will meet. Instructor Ruth Sherman will lead the exercise class through balance, stretch, and weight-bearing exercises. Offered free of charge. *Exercise level: moderate.*

Instructor: Ruth Sherman. Class limit: 24.

Pilates Mat for Strength & Flexibility

Pilates is an exercise system focused on improving flexibility and strength for the total body with a series of controlled movements engaging your body and mind. Students must bring their mats and be able to get up and down from the floor without help. *Exercise level: moderate.*

Instructor: Charlene Erwin. Class limit: 18.

Exercise Classes

Strength, Stretch & Core

This class will focus on total body and core strength. The course will start with a 10-minute warm-up. This will be followed by work to improve strength, balance, and movement. We will focus on exercises to strengthen the major muscles of the core and arms. Our workout will finish with a cool-down followed by stretching to help maximize our functional movement. This class will use machines, free weights, and bands. You will leave feeling stronger and energized! *Exercise level: moderate.*

Instructor: Beth Dalen. Class limit: 10.

Strength Training

This class emphasizes flexibility and balance exercises to stretch and strengthen all muscle groups. Hand weights can be used for students that are knowledgeable and experienced with the exercises. Chairs are used as a prop as well as mat work on the floor. Please bring your mat for floor work. *Exercise level: moderate.*

Instructors: Jill Franke, Debra Cardamone. Class limit: 10.

Tai Chi, Advanced

This class reviews and fine-tunes the various Tai Chi techniques and methods used in the traditional Yang Style Tai Chi Chuan long form. Tai Chi is a gentle exercise that builds strength, balance, coordination, and focus while teaching the body to move in a dynamic, relaxed manner. Students are required to be on their feet throughout the class. Previous study of Tai Chi is highly recommended. This class is hybrid. *Exercise level: moderate.*

Instructor: Mari Lewis. Class limit: 12 in-house.

Tai Chi for Arthritis (SWCAA)

The WCSA has been awarded a grant from the Southwestern Connecticut Agency on Aging (SWCAA - www.swcaa.org) for a Tai Chi for Arthritis and Fall Prevention Program developed by the Tai Chi for Health Institute. This program uses Dr. Paul Lam's Sun-style Tai Chi to improve movement, balance, strength, flexibility, and relaxation. The goal of this program is to decrease pain and falls for seniors with or without arthritis and those wanting to improve their balance. This program will meet for one hour per week for 16 weeks and follow the curriculum set by the Tai Chi for Arthritis and Fall Prevention Program. The program strongly encourages participants to practice what they learned in class for 30 minutes a day, at least four days a week. This program is partly funded by the Federal Older Americans Act through the Southwestern Connecticut Agency on Aging. All older persons (60 or over) are eligible for services under the approved program. Donations are accepted. *Exercise level: gentle.*

Instructor: Tim Crager. Class limit: 18.

Tap Dancing

Tap dancing is a mild aerobic exercise. It exercises every part of you: your brain, body, and spirit. The best part of participating in tap dancing is it puts a smile on your face. Tap shoes are required. Suggested websites to purchase shoes: Capezio (<https://www.capezio.com/>) or Amazon (www.amazon.com). *Exercise level: vigorous.*

Instructor: Kristine Bingham. Class limit: 12.

Exercise Classes

Tech-Fit Strength & Core (SWCAA)

The Tech-Fit program is designed to build strength, increase flexibility, and strengthen abdominal and back muscles to stabilize the trunk or core. By supporting the core and increasing flexibility, we can reduce the risk of falls for the participants. This program will use videos which will be shown on a large screen while the participants follow along, and live instruction by Patty Kondub to teach the different types of exercises that are designed to strengthen the core and increase flexibility. This program is funded through a grant from the Southwestern Connecticut Agency on Aging (SWCAA). All older persons (60 or over) are eligible for services under the approved program. Donations are accepted. *Exercise level: moderate.*

Instructor: Patty Kondub. Class limit: 24.

Weights in Motion

Move to the beat of music using handheld weights for this total body workout. Don't forget your mat for floor work. This class is hybrid. *Exercise level: vigorous.*

Instructor: Shelley Moll. Class limit: 12 in-house.

Yoga for Total Health

Gentle Kripalu yoga warms up all the joints of the body, stretches and strengthens the muscles, and helps with balance and focus. Leave class feeling refreshed and alive! Students must have their mat and be able to get up and down from the floor without help. This class is hybrid. *Exercise level: moderate.*

Instructor: Denise O'Hearn. Class limit: Depends on room size.

Yoga for Well-Being

This class offers mindful exploration of breath and movement in a gentle-moderate way, thoughtfully sequenced to increase self-awareness. It relieves aches and pains, restores flexibility and strength, and helps you experience deep relaxation through guided meditation. This class is hybrid. *Exercise level: moderate.*

Instructor: Paula Pastorelli-Schooler, R.N. Class limit: 12 in-house.

Zen Flow

This is a yoga-inspired class where the focus is on stretching and lengthening the muscles. Benefits include improved balance and core strength. The calming music and relaxation piece at the end will leave you feeling "ZEN". A mat is needed for floor work. This class is hybrid. *Exercise level: moderate.*

Instructor: Shelley Moll. Class limit: 12 in-house.

Exercise Classes

Zumba Gold

Ditch the workout and join the party in this easy-to-follow dance class. Enjoy the rhythms of the world, including Latin, Swing, Oldies, and Pop. Get your workout in through large flowing movements that should not put undue stress on the body, all the while smiling and lifting your spirits with upbeat music and moves. It is cardio-based, and its emphasis is always on FUN! Everyone is encouraged to modify moves for their fitness level, and we are always happy to have newcomers. *Exercise level: vigorous.*

Instructor: Karen Liss. Class limit: 12.

Games & French

Beginner Mahjong

Mahjong is an ancient Chinese tile-based game. Learn how to play this exciting and challenging game that requires strategy, memory and quick decision-making. This class is for those with little or no knowledge of the game or for those individuals looking to form a group and would like minimal instruction.

Instructor: Shelley Moll. Class limit: 16.

Play Mahjong on Mondays

In response to the increased popularity of Mahjong, the WCSA will have designated tables in the café available for groups who wish to Play Mahjong on Mondays. You must create your own group! Please note: This program is not instructional, and you must register to play.

No instructor. Class limit: 24.

BINGO

Join volunteer Doug Brill for in-house BINGO every Thursday from 1:15 to 3:00 PM. The cost is \$.05 per card per game. Remember to bring your own nickels!

Facilitator: Doug Brill. Class limit: 50.

Bridge for True Beginners

This class is for those who have want to learn to play bridge and have little or no experience. Required text: "[Knack Bridge for Everyone](#)" by D. Crisfield. Book cost: \$23.00. (ISBN-13: 9781599216157). *If you wish to order a book through the WCSA please do so no later than Wednesday, September 20.*

Instructor: Diana Sussman. Class limit: 16.

Bridge, Level 2.0

This class is a continuation of Bridge part IV. Required text: "[Knack Bridge for Everyone](#)" by D. Crisfield. Book cost: \$23.00. (ISBN-13: 9781599216157). *If you wish to order a book through the WCSA please do so no later than Wednesday, September 20.*

Instructor: Diana Sussman. Class limit: 16.

Games & French

Bridge, Intermediate

Learn ways to find better contracts and handle interference with more advanced play and defense techniques. This level is for players who have taken and completed the Beginner Part III course and for those who have experience playing duplicate and want to improve their game. Required text: "Knack Bridge for Everyone" by D. Crisfield. Book cost: \$23.00. (ISBN-13: 9781599216157). *If you wish to order a book through the WCSA please do so no later than Wednesday, September 20.* Additional optional text, "25 Conventions You Should Know", by Barbara Seagram, Marc Smith et al. (ISBN-13: 978-1771400718).

Instructor: Michael Hess. Class limit: 28.

French, Conversational

You will speak French from the moment you walk into class to the moment you leave. This class strives to improve your speaking and listening skills.

Instructor: Nell Mednick. Class limit: 10.

French, Intermediate

You will study from the textbook, "French is Fun" by Gail Stein, second edition, for advanced students. You will also discuss handouts which are emailed to the class every week in advance.

Instructor: Nell Mednick. Class limit: 10.

Support Groups

Early Onset Alzheimer's Support Group

The purpose of early-stage support groups is to provide a safe and supportive environment for peers and their care partners in the early stages of Alzheimer's disease or related dementia. This group offers dementia-related education, emotional support, and connections with resources so that the group members may enhance their lives in the midst of this disease. "Early stage" refers to people of any age with Alzheimer's disease or other dementia who are in the beginning stage of the disease. Please note: This program is not for caregivers. To register, please contact Amanda Lamb-Moretti, LMSW, at 860-383-2667 or her work cell at 475-222-7377.

Facilitator: Heather Gately. Class limit: 12.

Support Groups

Caregiver Support (SWCAA)

Terry Giegengack, MA, will facilitate this support group for those caring for loved ones with chronic illnesses. This program is designed to help learn and improve coping skills and relaxation techniques and develop a support network for those caring for loved ones. This program is funded partly by the Federal Older Americans Act through the Southwestern Connecticut Agency on Aging. All older persons (60 or over) are eligible for services under the approved program. Donations are accepted.

Facilitator: Terry Giegengack. Class limit: 15.

Just for Men Discussion Group

Join this casual men's chat group in person and in Zoom. The group meets to discuss issues or challenges men may be facing in their life and share in a supportive atmosphere. Personal stories will remain strictly confidential.

Facilitator: Dr. Paul Epstein. Class limit: 18.

Just for Women Discussion Group

Join this casual women's chat group in person. The group meets to discuss issues or challenges women may be facing in their life and share in a supportive atmosphere. Personal stories will remain strictly confidential.

Facilitator: Sandy Dressler-Berman. Class limit: 15.

Letting Go of Stress

Stress and tension take a toll on the body and mind, but you can learn to let go and relax. In this class, you will be guided through proven stress techniques, including mindfulness, breathing, and guided imagery to experience deep relaxation.

Facilitator: Diane Lowman. Class limit: 15.

Mindfulness: Be Here Now

How to Oy without the Vey. Transform stress, pain, and illness into a journey of self-healing and awakening. This class is offered free of charge. Donations to the WCSA are accepted.

Facilitator: Dr. Paul Epstein. Class limit: 24.

Parkinson's Support

This group will share challenges, techniques, support, and knowledge on Parkinson's disease. Professional guest speakers are often invited to share their knowledge. Family and caregivers are welcome. This group meets on the 4th Wednesday of the month.

Facilitator: Diane Bosch, RN. Class limit: 25.

Instructor Biographies

Jill Amadio is a novelist, crime writer, and biographer. She was a reporter in Europe, Southeast Asia, and North and South America before residing in Connecticut where she worked for the Connecticut Sunday Herald and Gannett Newspapers in New York, then lived in California working for Entrepreneur magazine.

Kristine Bingham is a graduate of the University of California, Irvine, majoring in dance. She has been Dance Captain for the Holland America Cruise line and featured on tour with the Radio City Christmas Spectacular. She has worked with many Broadway choreographers, including Chet Walker, best known for creating Fosse on Broadway. She was the assistant choreographer for SpongeBob the Musical, which performed at Coleytown Middle School. She is excited to bring her theater and jazz dance knowledge to the Westport senior center community.

Diane Bosch is a retired registered nurse with 45 years of hospital, geriatric and school nurse experience. She is a resident of Westport for over 40 years and recent member of the Friends Board of the WCSA.

Kathleen Burke, B.F.A., studied watercolor with regional painter Rachel A. Farrington. She is an associate member of the American Watercolor Society and New England Watercolor Society, a member of the International Association of Art-USA, an official partner of UNESCO, a member of the Greenwich Arts Society, and has won awards at Rowayton Arts Council.

Debra Cardamone is an experienced and dedicated fitness educator, group fitness instructor, and personal trainer specializing in the active older adult to encourage optimal health during aging. Deb has her degree in exercise science and is certified through AFAA. She is also a Cancer Exercise Specialist and is CPR-certified.

Tim Crager is a certified Tai Chi for Arthritis instructor with the Tai Chi for Health Institute (<https://taichiforhealthinstitute.org/>) and has been studying and teaching Tai Chi for over 20 years.

Beth Dalen is a longtime resident of Westport and an instructor at the Westport/Weston YMCA. Beth seeks to bring fitness into the lives of those around her. She is an NASM-certified personal trainer, licensed Zumba instructor, T.R.X. Level 1 Trainer, and a Certified Kaiser Cycle Indoor instructor.

Instructor Biographies

Dyan DeCastro is passionate about motivating the 50+ population to stay healthy, strong, and pain-free. She has been teaching Essentrics for over seven years and loves that Essentrics helps her students increase strength and mobility to maintain their independence. Through gentle, coordinated, and full-body movements, Dyan guides her students toward increased physical vitality and mental well-being.

Sandy Dressler-Berman is a licensed clinical social worker. During her 35-year career she has worked for the Department of Human Services, Greenwich Hospital Psychiatric Clinic, Yale University Medical School, the Westport public schools and hospice programs doing individual and group counseling.

Paul Epstein, ND, is a graduate of the National College of Natural Medicine (NCNM), specializing in mind-body integrative medicine and mindful healing. He maintains a thriving private practice in Westport, travels extensively, lectures, leads workshops and retreats worldwide, and offers imagery and mindfulness healing seminars. Dr. Epstein offers professional training and mentoring for health professionals to support, train and mentor those wanting to integrate mind-body medicine into their therapeutic work.

Althea Ericsson is a Yale University School of Architecture and Parsons School of Design graduate. She teaches at senior centers in lower Fairfield County.

Charlene Erwin was certified in 2002 by the Pilates Method Alliance and maintained this certification through the recently renamed National Pilates Certification Program. Charlene is also certified in personal training and group exercise by the American Council on Exercise (A.C.E.).

Jon Fox has a degree in history from Tufts University. Followed by three years as gunnery officer on the finest ship in the US Navy stationed mostly in the South Pacific, he spent a short time at the United Nations covering foreign press and reps. After working at a small jewelry company, Jon ended up opening factories in Thailand, China and India. With retirement in mind, he had a gallery in South Norwalk with Oriental antiques and handcrafts. He is a lifelong collector of coins and stamps.

Jill Franke has been a trainer and fitness instructor since 1985. Jill teaches Mat Pilates, Barre, and Spinning classes. She is a certified personal trainer and a member of the Aerobics & Fitness Association International Ballet & Barre Association.

Instructor Biographies

Terry Giegengack's professional experience includes casework and administrative positions. She served as the Director and Department Head for the Fairfield Department of Human Services, including the Bigelow Center for Senior Activities. Previously, she served as the Assistant Director for Client Services in the Westport Department of Human Services. Her graduate education was completed at Fairfield University with a master's degree in counseling. Continuing graduate education coursework was earned at the Fordham School of Social Services and Fairfield University's School for Education and Allied Professions in Supervision. Recent training was received with the CT Alzheimer's Association in group facilitation.

Chris Goldbach has taught art for 30 years at the Silvermine Art Center, Sacred Heart University, and now at senior centers in Fairfield County.

Marcia Goldstein Marcia Goldstein is a longtime resident of Westport and an active participant in several programs at the Westport Center for Senior Activities. After doing graduate work at Sacred Heart University, she had a career in the academic publishing industry for over twenty years. Marcia is an inveterate book reader and brings her unique perspective to the discussions at Current Events.

Art Gottlieb is a local historian on the subject of political and military history. He was formerly a professional curator of naval history and the Technical Director of Exhibits at the Intrepid Sea-Air-Space Museum in N.Y.C. In these roles, Mr. Gottlieb regularly worked with veterans of all services towards creating exhibits accurately illustrating the history of 20th-century warfare.

Michael Hess has been mentoring and teaching bridge for over 30 years. He is a Diamond Life Master with over 5,000 master points. Mike has won pair and team events at the club, sectional, regional, and national levels. In addition to winning several C.T. Unit #126 pairs and team titles, Mike's 2017 four-person Grand National team qualified to represent District 25 (New England) at the Summer Nationals in Toronto and then went on to win the North American championship for Flight A over five days.

Maj Kalfus attended the High School of Art & Design and the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York City. Maj worked in fashion illustration, merchandising, marketing, and design. She recently moved to Weston and is teaching Japanese brush painting, portraiture, color & design, and figure drawing at local senior centers.

Instructor Biographies

Barbara Kellerman was the Founding Executive Director of the Center for Public Leadership at the Harvard Kennedy School, the Kennedy School's James MacGregor Burns Lecturer in Leadership, and a Harvard faculty member for over twenty years. She is currently a Fellow at the Center. Kellerman has held professorships at Fordham, Tufts, Fairleigh Dickinson, George Washington, Uppsala, Christopher Newport Universities, Dartmouth and the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth. She also served as Director of Graduate Studies at Fairleigh Dickinson and Director of the Center for the Advanced Study of Leadership at the University of Maryland. Kellerman received her B.A. from Sarah Lawrence College and her M.A., M.Phil., and Ph.D. (in Political Science) degrees from Yale University. She was awarded a Danforth Fellowship and three Fulbright fellowships. At Uppsala (1996-97), she held the Fulbright Chair in American Studies. Kellerman has appeared on media outlets such as CBS, NBC, PBS, CNN, NPR, MSNBC, Reuters, and BBC, and has contributed articles and reviews to The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Boston Globe, The Los Angeles Times, and The Harvard Business Review.

Patty Kondub is a multi-certified fitness instructor with 35-plus years of experience. Her philosophy is to have fun while exercising your mind, body, and spirit. She is a Westport native, the Staples High School girls' golf coach, and Aqua Fitness Coordinator at the Westport Y. Her chair aerobic workouts have been featured on Public Access Channel 79 on Fridays during the pandemic. Patty is featured in the documentary, "Below the Surface," which tells the story of her aqua fitness program and its impact on participants' lives. It was released worldwide in January 2023.

Mari Lewis is an experienced Tai Chi instructor certified by the International Yang Family Tai Chi Chuan Association. She is a direct disciple of Grand Master Yang Jun, a 5th generation lineage carrier of the Yang-style Tai Chi Chuan.

Karen Liss has taught group fitness classes since she was 19 years old. In the decades since, she has reached thousands of people in New York City, Long Island, Westchester, Buffalo, and Fairfield County for the past 20 years. Her emphasis on bringing fun to every class (no matter how difficult the workout) accounts for her constant smile and ability to make people laugh. Her philosophy has always been that everyone is welcome, everyone should experience the joy of movement, and any effort is far better than sitting on the couch!

Diane Lowman's essays have appeared in many publications, including *O, The Oprah Magazine*, *Brain*, *Child*, *Brevity Blog*, and *When Women Waken*. She writes a weekly column called *Everything's an Essay*. In addition to essays, she has written a memoir called *Nothing But Blue*, published in November 2018. Shortly after, she received her M.A. in Shakespeare Studies from the University of Birmingham's Shakespeare Institute. In July 2019, she was named Westport's first Poet Laureate.

Instructor Biographies

Linda McKie-McClellan is a local artist who studied at the Tyler School of Art at Temple University, The Wooster Art Center in Danbury, and The Center for Contemporary Printmaking in Norwalk.

Nell Mednick is a native of Francophone Switzerland from the picturesque town of Vevey on Lake Geneva. Nell earned her Baccalaureate in the German-speaking city of Basel, where she became fluent in German. At age 18, she joined her parents in México City. After a brief intensive course, she enrolled at the University of México City and graduated with a degree in Spanish literature and Mexican art history. In 1973, she married an American in Switzerland and moved with her family to the U.S. Nell started a career in photography and had her own business for event photography until 2012. She loves people and languages!

Shelley Moll is a certified A.C.E. (American Council on Exercise) group fitness instructor. You might know her from her many years at the Westport Y as the Health and Wellness Director or Anytime Fitness, where she managed the Silver Sneaker program. Her most recent certifications are A.C.E. Certified Senior Exercise Specialist, Bionic Hips and Knees (Exercise for those with hip and knee replacements), Brains and Balance Certification with Cancer Exercise Specialist, Melt, and many other fitness and wellness-related certifications. Her years of experience in the fitness industry allow her to provide safe and effective workouts for all.

Denise O'Hearn is a certified Kripalu yoga teacher, a Chopra-certified health and meditation instructor, and Reiki practitioner. She helps people find relief from chronic pain and tension. Denise is a strong yet gentle and compassionate teacher who is enthusiastic about sharing the benefits of yoga and natural healing.

Paula Pastorelli-Schooler is a certified yoga therapist with the International Association of Yoga Therapists (2017) and the founder of Inquire Within Yoga for 20 years. With safety as the foundation of her classes, she encourages her students and clients to listen to their inner guidance, using breath and posture to cultivate their awareness in building their practice. She has studied with many masters, including her most powerful guide, Matt Sanford, who teaches Adaptive Yoga from his wheelchair. Paula graduated from the UMASS Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction program John Kabat-Zinn developed.

Penny Pearlman has an M.B.A. from the Wharton School and a B.A. in fine art from Queens College. She has appeared on numerous radio and television shows talking about the secrets of success.

Dick Rauh came to botanical painting in retirement after a career in motion picture special effects. A collection of his work received a gold medal from the Royal Horticultural Society in January 2006 and a Best in Show award. Dick teaches at the New York Botanical Gardens.

Instructor Biographies

Judy Samuels is a certified NASM personal trainer, corrective exercise coach, Precision Nutrition Coach, and AFAA certified group fitness instructor. Judy's been teaching fitness for over 20 years and especially enjoys working with seniors. She has taught strength training, T.R.X., Mat Pilates Mix, Core Barre, outdoor boot camps, Muscle and Tone, Parkinson's Boxing Circuit Classes, and does one-on-one personal training (now through Zoom!). She enjoys running, live theatre, needlepoint, and mostly spending time with her family and dog, Muffin.

Ruth Sherman is an experienced and dedicated fitness educator. She has taught exercise, fitness and aquatics in Westport at the WCSA and YMCA. Ruth is an avid walker and completed Spain's famous pilgrimage trail: the 100-mile El Camino spiritual trek.

Nor Smitobol was born and raised in Bangkok, Thailand, where he earned an architectural degree. Nor holds a Master's degree from Pratt Institute and is a licensed architect in NY and PA. For thirty years, Nor worked at the United Nations in NYC and other duty stations. His favorite media include watercolor, sketch, stained glass, clay work, rock painting, paperwork, and 3D origami.

Diana Sussman is a Westport resident who studied bridge under Michael Hess. She is passionate about sharing her love of bridge with you and hopes that you, too, will be infected by the "bridge bug." She graduated from the University of Pennsylvania Law School and Duke University.

Cindy Wagner's affection for painting began at fourteen when she worked alongside her father at his theatrical set production company, Variety Scenic Studios and Empire Stages in NYC. He was an inventive artist and mentor and a wonderful teacher. Her training over 4 years at Variety was much like a traditional apprenticeship. She learned traditional old master techniques as well as unconventional techniques used in the theater. Cindy's primary focus is representational painting. She also paints still life, portraits, landscapes from life when possible, as well as photographs, when needed. She will use a variety of painting techniques and mediums to achieve her vision. She had the opportunity to meet and learn from some of the most creative artists in NY such as Mark Chagall, Jim Henson and Spike Lee. A graduate of SUNY at Buffalo, she continued her studies taking art classes at Silvermine Art School. She attended advanced painting workshops and studied with master artists at their studios. Her website is www.cindywagnerart.com.

Instructor Biographies

Ruth Winnick, a movement therapist, will help you understand how to stretch and relax your muscles. Exercises will start in a chair and advance from there. Ruth studied the dance therapy master's program at N.Y.U. as a dance therapist and was accredited by the American Dance Therapy Association. She has worked as a movement therapist at Norwalk Hospital and in private practice.

Peter Zaccagnino is a local ukulele performer and teacher and has played the uke for over 55 years. He has a wide range of styles and materials to perform and teach. As a solo uke performer, he has performed at various venues, from the Gershwin Hotel in N.Y.C. to local senior centers. He plays music from Leon Redbone to Jimmy Buffett to Allan Sherman.